

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:WHMARSH:CBP

APPROVED BY EUR:JGLOWENSTEIN

IATF - MR. BROH-KAHN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 181041

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH PROCESSING OF INDOCHINA REFUGEES

1. AT THE REQUEST OF THE INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LOWENSTEIN TOOK UP WITH FRENCH CHARGE DE LA GORCE QUESTIONS CONCERNING INDOCHINA REFUGEES SEEKING TO GO TO FRANCE. LOWENSTEIN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY FRENCH CONSULAR OFFICERS IN THE US AND ASKED THAT THEY CONTINUE VISITS TO THE FOUR US REFUGEE CENTERS. THE MAIN PROBLEM AT PRESENT WAS THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES WERE AWAITING APPROVAL OF THEIR APPLICATIONS, I.E. THERE WAS A CONSIDERABLE BACKLOG OF DOSSIERS AT THE QUAI PENDING AUTHORIZATION OF LAISSEZ-PASSER.

2. ACCORDING TO THE LATEST DATA AVAILABLE THE SITUATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

(WHERE (A) REFUGEES AWAITING AUTHORIZATION OF LAISSEZ-PASSER; (B) REFUGEES WITH LAISSEZ-PASSER NOT YET HAVING DEPARTED CENTER; (C) REFUGEES WITH LAISSEZ-PASSER HAVING
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LEFT CENTER FOR FRANCE

CENTERS:

EGLIN (A) 33 (B) 18 (C) 55

INDIANTOWN (A) 198 (B) 6 (C) 18

GAP

PENDLETON (A) 1270 (B) 19 (C) 396

CHAFFEE (A) 2 (B) 10 (C) 352

TOTALS 1503 53 821

N.B. AT PENDLETON APPROXIMATELY 300 REFUGEES ACCEPTED US SPONSORSHIP, PRESUMABLY AS AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT, WHILE AWAITING ISSUANCE OF LAISSEZ-PASSER FOR FRANCE.

3. EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF RAPID PROCESSING AND DEPARTURE FROM THE CENTERS SO THAT REFUGEES IN VARIOUS ASIAN LOCATIONS MIGHT BE PERMITTED TO ENTER THE US REFUGEE CENTER SYSTEM, LOWENSTEIN ASKED DE LA GORCE TO URGE THE QUAI TO MAKE A MAXIMUM EFFORT TO EXPEDITE HANDLING OF APPLICATIONS. LOWENSTEIN ALSO ASKED DE LA GORCE TO STRESS TO THE QUAI THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCESSING APPLICATIONS TO ENTER FRANCE FROM REFUGEES IN ASIAN LOCATIONS TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE, THUS SPARING THE REFUGEES THE UNNECESSARY TRAVEL AND WAIT INVOLVED IN THEIR TEMPORARY TRANSFER TO THE US CENTERS.

4. DE LA GORCE RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY. HE PROMISED TO COMMUNICATE WITH AMBASSADOR CHAYET, QUAI DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS AND A PERSONAL FRIEND OF DE LA GORCE. DE LA GORCE ALSO SAID THAT HE WOULD RENEW EFFORTS TO ASSURE THAT US-BASED FRENCH CONSULAR PERSONNEL VISITED THE CENTERS AS FREQUENTLY AS NECESSARY.

5. PLEASE REINFORCE THE FOREGOING DEMARCHE BY EMPHASIZING TO CHAYET OR OTHER APPROPRIATELY HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL THE NEED FOR GREATER URGENCY IN PROCESSING AND APPROVING REFUGEE APPLICATIONS FOR LAISSEZ-PASSER, I.E. MORE EXPEDITIOUS HANDLING OF THE PAPERWORK BY THE QUAI. PLEASE UNDERSCORE, AS WELL, THE IMPORTANCE OF MAXIMUM FRENCH CONFIDENTIAL

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PROCESSING OF REFUGEES NOW LOCATED IN EAST ASIA. INGERSOLL

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